

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed June 5, 2002 (paper No. 21), the Examiner indicates that claim 21 is allowable and objects to claims 16 and 19 as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but finds that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. (Office Action, at 4, ¶ 7.) Applicants thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter.

Before the present amendment, claim 16 depended from claim 12, which in turn depended from claim 11. Claim 16 has been rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of claims 11 and 12. In addition, before the present amendment, claim 19 depended from claim 18, which in turn depended from claim 17. Claim 19 has been rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of claims 17 and 18. It is therefore respectfully submitted that claims 16 and 19 are in condition for allowance.

In addition, claims 1-15, 17, 18, and 20 have been canceled, without prejudice. The above amendments and claim cancellations do not represent acquiescence in the Examiner's rejections and are made to expedite prosecution of the present application. Applicant reserves the right to resubmit these claims in, for example, a continuation application. It is also respectfully submitted that the above redrafting of claims 16 and 19 into independent form is not a narrowing amendment pursuant to *Festo Corp. v. Shoketsu Kinzoku Kogyo Kabushiki Co., Ltd.*, 122 S. Ct. 1831 (2002) (see also *Festo Corp. v. Shoketsu Kinzoku Kogyo Kabushiki Co., Ltd.*, 234 F.3d 558 (Fed. Cir. 2000) (en banc)), since it does not change the scope of those claims.

New claim 22 has also been added to further define the invention.

This Response was originally due September 5, 2002. Accordingly, applicants submit herewith a Petition for Extension of Time (one month) to render this Response timely.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable disposition is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

U.C. 27 by No. 36,191

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By:

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